

Housing Southern California



What is the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)?

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is mandated by State Housing Law as part of the periodic process of updating local Housing Elements of the General Plan. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing by income group within each jurisdiction during specified planning periods. The current planning period is January 1, 2006 to June 30, 2014.

What is SCAG's role in the RHNA process?

As a regional Council of Governments (COG) for Southern California, state law requires SCAG to "determine the existing and projected housing need for its region" by allocating the regional share of statewide need approved by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The SCAG region includes Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Upon request, SCAG's role may be delegated to a subregion.

What are the measurements of housing need that go into the RHNA?

The RHNA consists of two measurements of housing need: 1) existing need, and 2) future need. The existing need assessment examines key variables from the 2000 Census to measure ways in which the housing market is not meeting the needs of current residents. This includes the number of low-income households paying more than 30% of their income for housing, as well as how many people live in severe overcrowded units. Farm worker needs and housing preservation needs are also identified.

How does SB 12 impact the RHNA process?

SB 12 allows SCAG to make modifications to its RHNA process for one Housing Element update cycle. The bill does not change existing law relative to the criteria for determining a jurisdiction's forecast of housing need.

The future need for housing is determined by SCAG's growth forecast and public participation process. Each new household, created by a young adult moving out of a parent's home, by a family moving to a community for employment, and so forth, creates the need for housing. The anticipated need for new housing is then adjusted to account for an ideal level of vacant units and to provide for replacement housing.



California's homeownership rate in 2006 was the second lowest in the nation at 60%, while Southern California's homeownership rate was even lower at 56%.*

Data indicates that roughly half of Southern California's renters spend more than 30% percent of their monthly income on housing.*

By 2035, Southern California's population is expected to grow by 6 million people.

*Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development and www.census.gov





How is the RHNA used in the Housing Element update process?

Housing Element law requires local governments to adequately plan to meet their share of the regional housing need. The Housing Element update process addresses the statewide concern of providing “decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family,” in part by facilitating increases in housing supply to accommodate the needs of the state’s growing population.

Housing law recognizes that the most critical decisions regarding housing development occur at the local level within the context of a city’s general plan. In order for the private sector to adequately address housing needs and meet demand, local governments must regularly update their general plans, zoning, and development standards to provide opportunities for housing development for all income groups.

Communities decide how to address existing and future housing needs resulting from forecasted population, employment and household growth. The RHNA does not encourage or promote growth, but rather allows communities to anticipate growth, so that collectively the region and its subregions can grow in ways that enhance quality of life, improve access to jobs, promote transportation mobility, and address fair share housing needs.



How is the RHNA paid for?

COGs are no longer entitled to state reimbursement for RHNA costs. Consequently, the RHNA is paid for by SCAG through its General Fund. SCAG’s Regional Council is seeking reimbursement from the state for this mandated program.



What is the role of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in the RHNA process?

HCD is the agency responsible for the enforcement of Housing Element law, which includes the certification of the RHNA and updates made to the Housing Element by local jurisdictions.



How can SCAG assist cities and counties to plan for growth?

SCAG has committed several resources toward the development of regional growth strategies that can be used by local governments to address regional issues like clean air, mobility, and workforce housing to ensure the region can maintain and improve its high quality of life.



Compass Blueprint 2% Growth Strategy:
www.compassblueprint.org

SCAG’s Regional Council adopted a RHNA plan identifying a future housing need of just under 700,000 units for the period of January 2006 to June 2014 (8.5 years).

On September 7, 2007, HCD approved the SCAG RHNA plan for use by local governments in their Housing Element updates due June 30, 2008.



How do I get involved?

Visit
www.scag.ca.gov/housing



See our calendar for upcoming workshops and presentations.



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